



RADIATION EXPOSURE

What is RADIATION EXPOSURE?

Radiation is a form of energy that is present all around us. Different types of radiation exist, some of which have more energy than others. At high doses, radiation can be a serious health hazard.

A serious accident at a nuclear power generating facility, or an act of terror like exploding a radioactive bomb, could cause radiation to be released into the environment. After such a serious accident or terrorist incident, radioactive fallout could extend beyond the point of impact, potentially increasing people's risk of radiation illness.

Signs and Symptoms:

Radiation can affect the body in a number of ways, and the adverse health effects of exposure may not be apparent for many years. Signs and symptoms depend on the amount of radiation absorbed by the body, the type of radiation, the route and time of exposure, and the radiation dose absorbed by the person's body. After a serious incident, immediate health effects could include reddening of the skin, skin burns or Acute Radiation Syndrome. The immediate symptoms of Acute Radiation Syndrome are nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Long term health effects could include a higher risk of contracting cancer, or other serious diseases.

Routes of Exposure:

Exposure to radiation can take place through inhaling dusts suspended in the air or from dusts deposited on the skin or clothing. Exposure can also occur by contact with materials released at the point of impact (explosion or accident).

What can you do?

Emergency response leaders may direct people to evacuate or "shelter in place." Staying in your home may protect you from exposure to radiation. The safest place in your home during a radiation emergency is a centrally located room or basement without windows.

Treatment:

Hospital care for persons exhibiting signs and symptoms after a serious accident.

Diagnosis:

Based on known or suspected exposure.

Whom do you call?

Delaware Division of Public Health: 1-888-295-5156

For more information:

For more information on forms of acute radiation syndrome, go to: <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/radiation/>

Doc. # 35-05-20/07/03/39

24/7 Emergency Contact Number: 1-888-295-5156

Revised: 3/2007